Bennington May 9th 1845

My Dear Martha.

I have just taken up your Letter dated March 8th & have forgotten whether I have answered it or not. For fear that amidst the multiplicity of my cares I have neglected it I venture to crave the liberty of praying two for one than that there should remain any longer a possibility of neglect. As a visit to Gouverneur this ensuing Summer seems to be the uppermost topic in yours I reply first of all to that portion. What I may do in the month of October by way of visiting friends I can not say at this distance definitely. To spend any time previous to that in this way is positively impracticable. You may possibly be aware before this that sometime in the month of September last when there were no Schools in Bennington I was so urged by some 8 or four young Ladies to hear their recitations that I finally consented. And the result of this small beginning has been that I have now in successful operation in its third Term a Boarding & Day School for young Ladies. The present term closes about the middle of September next. We have in our family 15 Boarders — our whole School comprising some 50 young Ladies. We have three Pianos in our house — one of them belonging to our mu-

sic teacher & the other to Miss Preston- We have ten music scholars- some 15 to sing lessons in drawing & painting- taught by Miss Russell my principal Assistant. Our Seminary is on our own grounds- all connected with our house I spend 5 hours of each day in hearing recitations & this together with my Parish duties I find work enough. You perceive therefore the difficulty in the way of visiting Tennessee the Evening Sessions is too great to be surmounted. What we may do in the Autumn I am not sure. I am connected with this Parish by agreement only 15 Sabbaths longer. We are both exceedingly anxious as we have long been to leave this place. I have already sent out a letter to Bishop Johns of Virginia- making inquiries with a view of settling in his Diocese & am expecting an answer soon. If this should be favorable our path of duty & line of conduct should consider at once determined. It is my desire to devote all my powers to the upbuilding of the glorious Church founded on the Apostles & Prophets Jesus Christ himself being the Chief corner Stone But if it be the Lords pleasure that I unite the less honorable business of the School Master with the more highly responsible & ennobling duties of the Ambassador of the Blessed Jesus- I desire to do so in a more favorable Station than this. I shall probably address letters to other individuals & it remains to be seen of course whither the Lord will direct my steps. I have not read Arch Bishop Whately of whom you speak But have some curiosity to do so on account of your recommendation. The novelties which have come to some considerable extent disturbed the peace of the Episcopal church in this Country & England & which have so extensively provoked the bitter hostility of her enemies I am happy to believe- have nearly accomplished what ever of good or ill they were intended to effect. One thing is certain. The Church has been passing through a scene of trial- which- while it has excited the shouts & exultations of her foes has humbled her friends in searching & fasting & prayer before God- wherefore I am with much assurance assert- that in the midst of her afflictions she has been gaining fresh strength from on High & will most certainly come out of the furnace better prepared to contend with her enemies & achieve victories for her Lord. I hope & pray that in this my expectations may be more than realized

Give our affectionate remembrance to all friends & assure them that it would afford us great pleasure to pray them a long visit. Say to Preston that I have heard nothing as yet from Mr Hopkins. Had I time I would ride up & see him But it is real by his business to come & see me. However I will write him again & may soon obtain the money. Charlotte joins in much love to you

The Lord guide & keep us all in the right way

so that at the last we may meet in perfect fruition above is the fervent prayer of

Yours affectionately Son

A. O. Preston

S S S

East Bennington Vt
May 28

1834

Miss Sally S. Fisher
Care of Preston Esqr

Lawrenceburgh
Indiana